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EDITOR'S NOTES.

MEETING OF THE SUFFOLK CONFERENCE.

Nothing of so much interest to the denomination has occurred during the month, as the meeting in the Music Hall in Boston, called by the officers of the Suffolk Conference, in order to consider the raising of their portion of the funds of the American Unitarian Association for the present year.

We think there have been few meetings in the history of the denomination more important. This importance did not come from what was said by the speakers: it would have been almost as great, if no speeches had been made. The great value of the meeting was its proof of interest in our cause on the part of our people. The simple topic announced was this of raising money for the Association; and the speakers were their own ministers and laymen, whose voices had no novelty to attract. As if to put the interest in the subject to the severest possible test, the evening came with one of the worst rain-storms of the year. The streets, previously filled with soft snow, ran in muddy streams, the crossings being in many places hardly practicable; and the wind and rain made umbrellas an inade-

quate protection. We imagine that most of those who ventured out had the feeling that very likely the meeting would be adjourned. Instead of that, the Hall was completely filled up to the farthest gallery. There were the older ministers and laymen, whose names are identified with all the earlier movements of the denomination; and there were also the younger men of our community, showing, by their presence, that here at least the cause is not about to suffer from lack of this important element of strength. Those who know the capacity of the Hall have told us that twenty-five hundred persons were present. With the exception of a few from out of town, who were obliged to take the cars, the entire audience remained till after ten o'clock; and, at the close, adopted a resolution, offered by William H. Baldwin, Esq., that the Conference would raise $30,000 as their proportion of the year's contribution to the American Unitarian Association.

The value of this meeting will appear in its effect elsewhere, quite as much as in this immediate locality. It will be stimulating and encouraging beyond measure. We think it will do much to settle the question of our funds for the year. The only fear has been that people would hold back, from a feeling of doubt as to whether the contribution would be general. One man, who gave liberally last year and year before, came to us a few days ago, to ask as to the amount likely to be raised this year. "For," said he, "if it is to be $100,000, or any thing like it, I shall give what I gave before, and gladly; but if it is to be only $50,000, I shall only give half as much." Very many have the same feeling; and, when we reflect, it is reasonable enough. It is partly, perhaps, because of a sense of fairness, and a wish to do proportionately to what others are doing; but it is also, and chiefly, because the value of the movement is partly in the power it represents. The act of raising $100,000 has

an effect as an expression of life and earnestness, quite apart from the uses to which the money is applied. None can fail to see, that our denomination received an increase of strength, and a position among the religious bodies of Christendom, by the very fact of raising so much for its missionary work. Practical men wish to give according to the worth of what they are giving for; and it is no wonder that they would rather give $100 towards a $100,000 fund, than half that sum for one of $50,000.

It is in this view that we especially rejoice in this meeting at the Music Hall. It represented the largest and wealthiest collection of churches in the body, and made it apparent that in these, far from being any abatement of interest and confidence since two years ago, there has never been so general a determination to do generously and earnestly in support of our cause. We move in these matters shoulder to shoulder; and every church in the denomination will go forward in its collections with greater courage and earnestness because of this assurance of support.

NEW-HAMPSHIRE LOCAL CONFERENCE.

We attended, by invitation, a business meeting of the officers of the New-Hampshire Unitarian Association, at Nashua. All the ministers included in the Conference were invited to be present, and nine were there, representing every section of the State. Consultation was held in regard to the progress of the work previously organized, and it was very gratifying to see how effectively their plan was being carried out. Most of the brethren had entered vigorously upon missionary work, and important openings had already been made.

The whole plan may now be considered tolerably complete, as regards the special duty of each minister, and the

connection of all their operations with our central organization. The American Unitarian Association, in consideration of aid rendered to certain societies in the State, has the service of the pastors of those societies a given number of Sundays in the year. This will be under the direction of the New-Hampshire Conference, and will be partly in the way of supplying the pulpits of other ministers while they go out into their own special field of service. Besides this, in order to enable every minister to preach occasionally in places assigned to him, provision was made by which the American Unitarian Association should, in such cases, send a supply from Boston.

There is a double advantage in this latter arrangement; since it happens almost every Sunday, that several of our unsettled ministers, who for various reasons do not care to assume the permanent charge of a pulpit, are willing to preach in the way of a temporary supply; and it is always a matter of regret that their service should be lost. We shall be glad if the same plan can be carried out in all our Conferences so systematically, that no minister who is willing to preach shall have a Sunday unemployed.

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE CHURCHES.

Our parishes will have received, before this "Journal" is issued, the Appeal of the Committee appointed by our Executive Board, asking prompt and generous action in the raising of funds for the present year. Do not let it lie unread; and do not fail, as you value the interests of our sacred cause, to act upon it. Never could our opportunity be grander, or our prospects of usefulness more encouraging. But there is one reason more. It is evident that there could not be a more effectual remedy for any symptoms of division among us, than such a general and liberal

response as that which we expect. It would declare, unmistakably, — what we believe to be the fact, — that, notwithstanding the uneasiness of a few, there is, in our denomination as a whole, a unity of purpose and faith and aim such as it has never before possessed, and which, in spite of differences on points of belief, will make our people work and act together, as owning a common interest in something infinitely precious to them all. Let every one feel that on him or her rests part of the responsibility, and let us soon have occasion to report acknowledgments on a good, generous scale.

The work of the collection is to be greatly facilitated by the action of the Local Conferences. In most of these, the raising money for our Association has been made a matter of business; and either the officers of the Conference, or a special committee appointed for the purpose, have been intrusted with its execution. In some instances, at least, these committees have begun actively to undertake the work, and we hope that the result will furnish one illustration of the value and efficiency of this new organization of our denomination which the Local Conferences represent.

So far as the Executive Committee of the American Unitarian Association are concerned, there is nothing to abate the confidence with which they present their appeal for the continued support of the work of the Association.

Mr. Kidder, at the meeting in Music Hall, probably expressed the feeling of every one of his associates, when he declared, that, during his period of service, not one dollar had been given by the Board which he would desire to recall. He did not, of course, mean that the Committee had been guided by infallible wisdom in every vote, so as always to give to the best objects; but that, such is the extent and the certainty of our opportunity, it is impossi-

ble, with a reasonable degree of care, to expend money in this cause without producing sufficient return to justify the outlay. The letter of Rev. C. A. Staples, in another part of this Journal, will illustrate, by a description of what has been done in two States, what the work has been. Let our people only understand the importance of a full and a speedy response to the present appeal.

TRACTS OF THE ASSOCIATION.

We would call renewed attention to the fact, that the Tracts of the Association are designed for gratuitous distribution. These tracts are partly illustrative of the doctrines of Unitarianism, and partly on topics pertaining to the practical religious life.

Some of our ministers have adopted a plan of placing certain of these tracts, every Sunday, upon a table in the vestibule of the church, with a request that any who feel inclined will take them for private reading, and especially for distribution among persons disposed to accept them. The result of this method has been very encouraging. It has been the means of spreading very widely an acquaintance with our faith. In other societies, committees have been chosen for the purpose of circulating this portion of our literature, according to their zeal and discretion, at the same time calling attention, as opportunities offer, to our other publications. This tract distribution must be an important branch of our missionary activity; and we hope our friends everywhere will take note of the fact, that the tracts will be furnished on application to the office of the Association.

[The following article, and another which will appear in the next number, entitled "Christ, the Son of Man," belong to a series of discourses preached in St. Louis, and printed for the use of the congregation, with the title, "Christ's Record of Himself:" —]

CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD.

BY W. G. ELIOT, D.D.

"Though I bear record of myself, my record is true; for I know whence I came, and whither I go." — JOHN viii. 14.

RESTING confidently in the belief that Jesus is a teacher come from God, we stand upon what may be called distinctively Christian ground. Not that we mean to deny the Christian name to those who reject the supernatural element in revelation; but it is evident that there is a broad distinction here which we are compelled to recognize. However excellent the Christian system may be, so long as it fails in the claim to divine authority, Christianity can be no more to us than the best among the "philosophies" of the world. If all stand upon the same level of authority, we select one or other of them, according to our best judgment. The sole authority, after all, would be in our own minds. But when we have once admitted that Jesus came from God; that he was inspired by the Divine Spirit, to reveal the truth and the will of God; that "he spake with authority," and not as the philosophers and scribes, — we are removed from the school of speculation to that of discipleship. We become learners, to sit at the feet of Jesus, — we look to him for the words of eternal life. The whole realm of theological inquiry is still before us; but there is an authority of final appeal. When we know

what Jesus taught, whether in precept or doctrine, it becomes to us the rule of our lives, the law of our thoughts.

I am not able, in this respect, to see any half-way ground. However much we may dispute concerning the instructions of Christ, we cannot dispute, after we have once admitted his divine mission, as to our duty in receiving and obeying his words. Perhaps it is here, and not in disputed doctrines, that the radical difference is found, indicated by the modern use of the word Evangelical. Unless the word is used merely for sectarian exclusiveness, as the Shibboleth of a party, the evangelical Christian is one who accepts the Evangel, or gospel, of Jesus Christ, as the authority, the final appeal, in matters of faith and practice. They who refuse to do this must regard Jesus merely as a human teacher, and, although they may call him "The Christ," may be still looking for another. Their effort must be, not so much to know the mind of Jesus, as to know their own minds. The name of Christian may be freely accorded to them if they claim it; because their lives may bear Christian fruit, and their conscientious purpose may be to live according to the pure spirit of Christianity. They may be nearer to Jesus, in fact, than many who are stronger in their belief. They are oftentimes seekers after truth, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, having really been educated by Christian influences up to the Christian standard, although intellectually disputing the Divine Christian authority. "To his own master every one standeth or falleth: who art thou that judgest another man's servant?"

But the distinction to which we refer is not the less real, and cannot be kept out of sight. Christian charity does not require, and allegiance to truth does not permit us, to neglect it. It is vital both in religion and theology. Are we disciples, or is Christ only first among equals? To

me, I confess, the question is one of infinite significance. Without deciding for others or judging them, it is to me a matter of infinite importance, to know whether I have a guide, a master, an authority, or not. I feel most deeply the comfort of those words which Jesus spoke to his disciples, before parting with them: "Peace I leave with you, my peace give I unto you; let not your heart be troubled, neither be ye afraid; as my Father spake unto me, even so have I spoken unto you." I would not, for the whole world, lose that confidence, that trust, that "repose which ever is the same." I would not, for the world, feel that all the great truths of religion depend, for their certainty to me, upon my own speculations. It is true that they are rational conclusions; and the more we study them, the more perfectly they seem in accordance with the natural laws of thought. The philosophical development of our own minds leads us continually back again to Christian truth. Natural religion, so called, culminates in the divine. But still I am thankful to God, that, on the portals of that resting-place of faith, it is written, "Thus saith the Lord." The perfect harmony between educated natural reason and the divine instructions of Jesus, should not deceive us. As, in moral philosophy, the highest goodness leads to the most perfect individual happiness, and the two ultimately coincide; and yet not happiness, but duty alone, must be recognized as the motive and law, or our seeking for happiness soon degenerates into self-seeking, which uses goodness as an instrument or means to a higher end, and sacrifices both means and end by the same mistake: so it is in the department of religious truth, that reason, guided by the divine authority, leads us to assured convictions concerning God and eternity, and we are betrayed into thinking that the conclusion belongs to our own natural thought, and that no submission to authority is longer

required. But let the authority be discarded, hold to the truth discovered as only a human deduction from human premises, and the established foundation begins to give way, the superstructure of faith begins to totter. We think, instead of believing; we hope, instead of trusting; and presently go out from that peaceful resting-place, as wanderers, to seek after God, if haply we may find him. By no such speculations concerning truth did the elders obtain their good report. By no such questionings and probable conclusions were the martyrs' noble host strengthened and glorified. By no such human philosophy, however transcendental, were the apostles inspired to exclaim, "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." That is the word of power, "through our Lord Jesus Christ." He spake that which he knew, and testified that which he had seen, and we receive his witness. Human hesitation and doubt may remain; the weakness of the flesh may make the spirit waver; but the anchor of Christian faith is sure and steadfast. We know in whom we have believed, and return to him, again and again, from all our inquiries, to hear the words of eternal life.

The question of divine authority being answered, the first and most natural inquiry, in the settlement of our religious faith, is that which concerns Jesus himself. We may, indeed, obey his commands and believe his doctrines, without knowing any thing more concerning him, than that he was an inspired teacher. But the confidence of our faith and the fervor of our devotion must depend a great deal upon our opinions concerning him who brings the instruction and the commands. Who was Jesus Christ? What place does he hold in the universe? What do we mean when we call him divine, and when we call him human? What was he, not only in his office, but in him-

self, in his own nature? How does he stand in his relation to God, and how in relation to man?

The form in which we have put these questions will at once show to any thoughtful person, that the answer cannot be sharply and exactly given. Our knowledge of spiritual life is so imperfect, our conception of spiritual existence is so dim, that we see through a glass darkly at the best, and not yet face to face. We do not yet know as we are known. Ask the same questions concerning yourself, your own existence, your exact place in the universe; your relation to God, — how it is that you are dependent upon him, and yet free; your relation to man, — how it is that we are all equal before God, and yet separated from each other, through imperceptible gradations, by a distance almost as great as that which separates the grovelling brute, living upon husks, from the angels that wait to do God's bidding nearest to his throne, so that the same human nature includes the lowest cannibal savage and the highest Christian philanthropist, — and you will feel the limitation of your ignorance and weakness concerning yourself, not less than when you are seeking to be wise above what is written concerning Jesus Christ. We are like children having learned the alphabet, who make experiment of their knowledge by reading the poetry of Milton and the speculations of Plato. He who inquires about the spirit's life and growth, whether of his own soul or of those who are above him or below him, will find himself in a world of mystery. Like the bird which rises for a time with strong and confident wing, but presently the thinness of the air, the weakness of his muscles, and the attraction of the earth, compel him to return, exhausted and weary, to a resting-place; so, in our researches for spiritual truth, we advance confidently, with the feeling of assured knowledge, positive both in denial and assertion,

sanguine in the hope of arriving at the ultimate truth; but soon, in the ascending flight, feel ourselves checked, limited, restrained, drawn back again to reconsider the premises of thought, compelled to seek a resting-place in the alphabet of Christianity. We begin with confidence, and come back with humility. We begin thinking ourselves little lower than the angels, and come back to prostrate ourselves before God, and exclaim, "What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him?" We begin with the thought that we can comprehend God himself, and all the mysteries of his infinity, and come back with the conviction that we do not even know ourselves. It is the practical lesson of humility, but also of conscious exaltation. Our hearts empty themselves of pride and arrogance, to become full of adoration and faith. We claim to know less; in reality, we know infinitely more. We would as soon think of bounding infinite space, as to define, in exact words, either the nature of God or of man, who was created in the image of God. But our consciousness of spiritual life and personal immortality becomes continually deeper; and the God, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, finds his dwelling-place in the humble and contrite heart.

Therefore let those who begin their theological inquiries with compass and line, to fix the exact boundaries of Christ's nature, as they would survey a field before buying it, — let them first try the experiment upon themselves. When they can tell me of their own souls, where the human ends and the divine begins, I will tell them the same concerning him. They who cannot tell what to think of John the Baptist must be content to remain in partial ignorance concerning him whose shoes John the Baptist was not worthy to bear. Something we may know, and I think abundantly enough for all the practical uses of life

and for its consolations. "My grace is sufficient for thee," was the answer to St. Paul, when he prayed that some thorn in the flesh should be removed. In like manner, the knowledge which we have is sufficient for us, if we use it well; and the truth which is made known may become more vitalizing to our souls because of that which remains unrevealed.

The principal source of knowledge concerning Jesus Christ must evidently be his testimony of himself. It is possible that his disciples were mistaken in their estimate of him, as we know they were during a great part of their lives; but his record of himself must be received as true. Even those who only admit that he was an honest, truth-telling man, must either modify that admission, or must equally admit that what he said of himself must be believed. But those who assent to his divine authority have committed themselves still more fully, and are no longer at liberty to question the truthfulness of his claims. It seems to me, that, among Christians, we may narrow down this question concerning Christ to the simple inquiry, "What did he himself say?" Both as to his exaltation and authority, and as to the limitations of these, if limitations exist, we are bound, as Christians, to rest upon his testimony, and have no right either to fall short of it, or to go beyond it.

After a careful examination of this testimony, we come to a clear and positive conviction upon at least two points in the case. First, that Jesus Christ claimed for himself a degree of dignity, authority, and power, such as no one else in all the records of history has ever claimed; and, secondly, that he distinctly declared the fact of limitation, and his own entire dependence upon God. These two propositions can be fully established by any one who will read the four Gospels with care. And although they may

leave a great deal that we wish to know still unsettled, they give a firm standing-ground of evangelical and reasonable belief.

Let us examine both propositions with the Bible before us; for I think that many will be surprised at the clearness and fulness of the proof.

In the first place, we assert that Jesus uniformly claimed for himself dignity, knowledge, authority, power; in a word, an elevation, both of nature and of office, such as no other teacher or lawgiver ever claimed. Neither Moses nor the prophets, nor Zoroaster nor Confucius nor Mahomet, nor any other whom history names, has dared to assume the position which Jesus assumed and maintained, by word and action, in his relation both to God and man. Nor do we refer, in this assertion, to special isolated passages, which ingenious critics may explain away, or get rid of as interpolations; but it rests still more upon the general tone of Christ's language and demeanor. The Sermon on the Mount is the utterance of a Lawgiver and Judge, who claims the right to fulfil or to destroy. "You have heard that it was said in old times;" but "I say unto you," that a new and better law is given. He declares the terms of acceptance with God, without hesitation, and claims a personal part in their enforcement. "Many shall say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord; but I will profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. vii. 22). Heaven and earth might pass away, but "my words shall not pass away" (Matt. xxiv. 35). He declared the sins of the penitent to be forgiven, and pronounced the sternest judgment of God upon the unbelieving and rebellious. He spoke of sins that could not be forgiven in this world, nor in the world to come (Matt. xii. 31). In speaking of the final judgment, or of the principles on which men will be judged, he

says, "Then shall the King" (meaning himself),—"then shall the King say, Come, ye blessed of my Father;" or "depart from me, ye accursed" (Matt. xxv. 34). "Whosoever confesses me before men, him will I also confess before the Father in heaven. Whosoever denieth me, him will I also deny" (Matt. x. 32). In speaking of the conflict of the world against himself, the chief stone of the corner, he said, "Whosoever falls on this stone shall be broken; but upon whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder" (Matt. xxi. 44). "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works" (Matt. xvi. 27). "All things are given to me of my Father," he said at another time; "and no man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him" (Matt. xi. 27). And then, having declared this closeness of relation with God, he turns himself towards man, with the ineffable dignity of saving love and power, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." When the disciples disputed concerning superiority, he rebuked them, and said, "Neither be ye called masters; for one is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren" (Matt. xxiii. 10). He distinctly declared himself, with a solemnity that indicates a peculiar meaning in the words, to be the Christ, the Anointed, the Messiah, "the Son of the living God;" and, when adjured by the high priest to tell them who he was, he added to such words as I have spoken, "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Matt. xxvi. 64). He taught his disciples, that, after he should leave them, his continued assistance and prayers for them would be essential, and said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my

name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. xviii. 20). Before his leaving them, according to the gospel record, he spake to them and said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations;" that is, make disciples of them. I ask you to observe the absoluteness of authority, the comprehensiveness of the command, "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" thus introducing himself into that close affinity with God the Father, and claiming a personal place and office in the religion of the world; "teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. xxviii. 18).

We have thus far looked only at the Gospel of Matthew, and gleaned but a small part of the proofs which it affords. If we turn to the Gospel of John, their abundance is so great, that the recital of them would be simply to read the Gospel itself. When accused of violating the sabbath day, Jesus answered, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John v. 17). What was the point of that answer? It was as if he had said, "The creative and sustaining power of God is not suspended on the sabbath day, and under the same divine authority I go on to work." The words were so striking, that the Jews thought them blasphemous; and he explained them by saying that he did not speak of independent authority (John v. 19). He declared himself, in the strong, figurative language of Scripture, more forcible than literal words, to be "the bread from heaven" (John vi. 51, 53) which every man must eat, to partake of the heavenly life. Again he said, with great solemnity, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink: he that believeth on me, out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water" (John vii. 37). At another time, varying the expression but repeating the

same idea, he said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John viii. 12). He called himself the door through which every man must pass (John x. 1); the vine upon which all living branches must grow, in order to bear any fruit (John xv. 1). In more literal words, he said, "No man cometh to the Father but by me" (John xiv. 6). When asserting his power to fulfil his promises, he said, "My Father who gave them me is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one" (John x. 29). The Jews again misunderstood him; and he explained himself as claiming delegated, not independent, power.

We are confining ourselves, you will observe, to Christ's own language concerning himself; and I have purposely avoided exceptional passages, and those which are of doubtful interpretation. The quotations given are such as to indicate the general tone of the Gospels. It is the tone of judicial authority, which could rightly be used by a divine ambassador, who knew himself to be speaking the words of divine truth, the commands of a divine law, the promises of divine love, the threatenings of divine justice. Imagine it to be assumed by any other, and it would be either blasphemy or madness. Nor can you get rid of it by any degree of critical boldness or ingenuity. Expurgate all such claims from Christ's words, and there would not be enough left to constitute a personality. The mythical system of Strauss, which is the destruction, not the expurgation, of history, would be the only result.

In this respect, at least, the life-like history of Jesus, by Renan, to which I have already referred, will do good. He makes Jesus a real personage, and divests him of all mythical appearance; so that we feel sure that such a person lived at the time, and under the circumstances, and

among the people, described in the Gospel history. But, admitting so much as this, how can we help going further? How can we avoid admitting that this Jesus being, as is supposed, a good and true man, made claims to a dignity altogether inconsistent with the idea, we do not say of advanced goodness, but even of common honesty? Listen to those words, which he spoke with such awful solemnity, and from which every believer continually derives hope and strength: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die" (John xi. 25). And again he said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John xiv. 6). And yet again, "This is the will of Him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day" (John vi. 40). "For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself, and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John v. 26). "For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father" (John v. 21). "Verily, verily I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live" (John v. 25). Interpret the words as you will, whether of the resurrection from sin to spiritual life, or from the grave to immortality, the language is utterly incompre-

hensible, as spoken by an honest man, without peculiar divine authority. They are imposture or madness or inspiration. Imagine them to be spoken by the best man you know, or of whom you may have read in history, and you will see how impossible they are, except under one of those suppositions. It is not only that the words are strong in themselves, and in the spiritual truth conveyed, but that they are made personal to Christ himself, as the agent of their fulfilment. Separate them from him, the speaker, and they are altogether lost. They are not abstract propositions to be proved, but personal testimony to be believed. We may verify them by the spiritual experience of personal faith; but we cannot abstract them from Jesus himself, who first proved their truth, and gave it to us as the established law of life, without denying its veracity at the same time. The Christian system is "the truth as it is in Jesus," not in abstract propositions. We cannot hold to it as Christian truth; or, at least, I cannot, when we have falsified him.

According to my reading of the Scripture, therefore, the first proposition concerning Jesus Christ is fully proved. Whether we can fix the exact point of his elevation or not, and however ignorant we may be of his essential nature, as indeed we are ignorant of our own, we have abundant evidence from his own words and demeanor, that he occupied an exceptional place, both in relation to God and man, to do a work peculiar to himself, for the glory of God, and for the salvation of the world.

It remains to prove the second proposition, that his own words and conduct equally declare a limitation of authority, and his entire dependence upon God.

A RECORD OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

LETTER IV.

THE greater part of the charges which a liberal mind is obliged to bring against the Episcopal Church may be summed up in St. Paul's reproof of the Athenians, "I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious." To begin at the beginning.

The Church is too superstitious about the Bible. This statement requires no explanation nor proof, if we listen for a moment to the uproar caused by the learned and honest expositions of Bishop Colenso, and by his brave proposition, that it is the duty of religious teachers to investigate all authorities which can throw light upon these ancient records.

I used to think that it was a noble provision of the Church to arrange for the reading of so great a portion of the Scriptures every year by means of the daily lessons; but, though this system is good so far as it goes, it by no means extends far enough to meet the wants of the age and the progress of knowledge. Besides, the selections are made in such a way as to give an unskilled hearer the impression, that the Bible was written for the express purpose of dovetailing with the Liturgy; and many doctrines receive more support thereby than an impartial consideration of the Sacred Word will warrant.

They insist upon taking the whole Bible exactly as it stands; like the Pope's choir, who, in the course of the musical services of Holy Week, devote one of their most magnificent chants to the words, "Here beginneth the Lamentations of the Prophet Jeremiah, chapter first." They are afraid to awaken inquiry and to confess mistakes, lest the Revelation, as a whole, should lose its influence upon the people. This is very foolish: truth will take care of itself; and those who try to disguise it will only bring contempt upon themselves. The Bible teaches that there is a God; and Christ tells us therein to love God and our neighbor. These principles are enough to make the book immortal, and to save the race; and, if need

be, all the rest can go. But it will not all go. Errors of ignorance will be exposed; truths disguised or only partially appreciated heretofore will be brought out into purer light, when they will grow and spread for the healing of the nations: but the day has gone by when clergymen can afford to be ignorant of the book they profess to accept as the ground of their faith, or, being wise, can afford to conceal their wisdom through mistaken pity for their congregations. The worst of it is, that many clergymen are so wedded to a definite and inflexible system, that they will not see farther than their predecessors: they prefer to take the testimony of "the Fathers" to the accumulated knowledge of all succeeding generations.

But the ocean of Truth, though always remaining sweet and strong and never losing the savor of its salt, yet changes its shores to suit the progress of universal law; and these old arks of a dead theology, which dare not venture out in search of new worlds, and are already stranded in shallow harbors, shall be left high and dry, to fall to pieces and be forgotten, excepting as their soundest timbers help to build a larger and safer transport for earnest souls to sail the sea of thought.

Again, there is too much superstition about baptism. More attention is paid to infant baptism in the Episcopal Church than in any other, excepting the Roman Catholic; indeed, these two Churches seem to forget, that, in any case, baptism is extended to children rather by courtesy than command. Considered as a profession of faith by the parents, and a public declaration of their intention to bring up their child in its highest duties, this is a beautiful rite; and, to those who need outward helps to inward devotion, it may be of great use and comfort: but, when claimed to possess the power of conferring spiritual graces and mysterious renovating influence upon the unconscious infant, it degenerates into a dangerous superstition. It is absurd enough to see frivolous and even vicious parents stand before the baptismal font, themselves and their child arrayed in all the bravery of dress and ornament that fashion exacts of its votaries, and hear them utter the solemn mockery of promising to renounce "the pomps and vanities of this wicked world" in behalf of the wondering child; but to

hear the clergyman, after the sprinkling of a few drops of water, and the recital of a few prayers, address the people with the assumption, "Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this infant is regenerate," is too much, when we know from experience of life what sort of character is almost sure to be developed by the child of such parents. If there were any indications that baptized persons, as such, are any better than those who are not baptized, there would be reason for considering the rite as "necessary to salvation;" but there is no such warrant for the claim: the grape and the thorn, the fig and the thistle, bear each its natural fruit, in silent defiance of any juggling that may be practised upon them; and baptism confers benefit according to the sincerity of those who make and perform its vows, and not from any inherent virtue in its consecrated waters.

Again, there is too much superstition about the rite of confirmation, both with regard to its effect upon the recipient, and also concerning the power supposed to reside alone in the highest of the three orders of the ministry. There is no proof in the world, that confirmation has any connection with the apostolic observance of laying on of hands; though whether it have or no is a matter of very small importance, at this late period of altered circumstances. And yet, not a year ago, I heard a bishop say, in a sermon before a large and enlightened audience, that, though it was not for him to set bounds to the mercy of God, he did not see how any man could be saved who neglected or rejected the requirements of the Church in baptism, *confirmation*, and communion; thus slyly, or rather, boldly, placing confirmation on a par, as to its necessity, with the two acknowledged sacraments of Orthodox Christianity. There is, of course, no objection to the rite of confirmation when regarded only as a solemn ratification of baptismal vows by the responsible Christian; but, when Keble and Coxe, and other Church poets, write mysterious twaddle about its efficacy, and bishops make its reception a condition of acceptance with God, especially when the people who have had traced on their souls "that blessing dear, that dove-like hand," go about among us no better, no more useful or holy, than those who

have escaped that gentle violence, — the performance does not answer to the promise; and so thoughtful observers can but conclude that the work, not being of God, will come to nought. With this observance, however, as with every other, it is good for those who sincerely receive it; for the motto for us all with regard to faith is, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." The objection lies in the attempt of a small section of believers to force their creed and ceremonies upon the whole world, and to condemn here and hereafter those who do not think with themselves. Not one word of these letters should I be writing, if I had another strict creed to recommend in place of the one I have tried and found wanting. It is because I have ceased to judge my brother that I feel justified in giving my testimony against the claims of this too arrogant Church. Oh, my brethren! God's love is too broad and deep and high to be confined within a few drops of water, or a morsel of bread and a sup of wine, or the willing pressure of a good man's hand. Let those who find comfort therein go on their way rejoicing; but let them grant to all who are either too carnal to appreciate these symbols, or too spiritual to need them, the benefit of God's judgment rather than man's, and free room to work out their own salvation in their own way.

Again, there is too much superstition about the commemoration of the Lord's Supper.

When an Episcopal clergyman speaks of this ordinance as "the Eucharist," we may be pretty sure that he is a Puseyite (or, as I once heard a lady, who was quicker at recognizing things than at catching names, call it, "a Pussylite"); in other words, that he belongs to that party in the Church which is so "High" as to deserve the name of "the Mountain," which, if it do not acknowledge transubstantiation, at least holds a doctrine so nearly allied to it, that the difference is inappreciable by merely common sense. If he speaks of the "Holy Communion," we may know that he attaches some degree of mystery to the rite, and fears lest any of his flock may therein eat and drink to their own condemnation. If he invites his people and other Christians to "the Lord's Supper," the chances are that he is a liberal-minded man, who is too gener-

ous and unsuspicious to perceive the fetters that lie under the flowery forms of the Liturgy; or, seeing and feeling them, chafes under their pressure, and would rebel against the tyranny, if it were not for the apparently feebler, but really stronger, network of education and habit, which binds him to his chosen work and office.

It is really pitiable to see how this beautiful and solemn act of remembrance is hedged in by tests and restrictions of man's devising, and how many are deprived of its soothing associations, through their own sensitiveness of feeling, or by the bigotry of their religious guides.

I remember a poem, by Arthur Cleveland Coxe, which used to harrow up my emotions to a dreadful degree during my days of exclusion from the full benefit of the Church's gifts. It is one of those productions which come under the head of "inspiration-and-water;" though, in this case, the diluting fluid was wine, in which there was a strong dash of subtle and deadly poison.

Here are the words of the first verse: —

"The organ played sweet music,
While, as on Easter Day,
All heedless from the altar,
The heartless went away.
And, down the broad aisle crowding,
They seemed a funeral train,
That were burying their spirits
To the music of that strain.
As I listened to the organ,
And saw them crowd along,
Methought I heard two voices
Speaking strangely, but not strong;
And one, it whispered sadly,
'Will ye also go away?'
But the other spoke, exulting,
'Ha! the soul-dirge! hear it play'"

I suppose it is lawful to take exception to these lines, seeing that they were written before their author became a bishop; but, without criticising the piece as a literary effort, in which sense it would however bear criticism, it seems to me that the

assumption is illiberal and wrong. According to my own observation and experience, it does not by any means follow, that, because the majority turn from the altar, they are heedless or heartless. More likely they go away sorrowful, and full of questionings as to why this one and that one, whom they know to be far enough from the standard of Christ in their daily walk and conversation, should be welcomed at that sacred board, while they are left out. Neither is there any probability that a whole train of people are going to their spiritual burial in a lump: in this throng, as in the company who close the doors upon the exiles, and prepare to enjoy those "holy mysteries," the law of just judgment holds good, and "one shall be taken, and the other left." The whole system is wrong. It hinges, as we all know, principally upon certain words of caution written by St. Paul to the Corinthian Church. But a close and patient investigation of language and circumstances, — that Biblical criticism by the natural laws of interpretation, which is so much dreaded and hated by adherents of the Orthodox theology, and which is destined to explode many an old falsity and develop many a new truth, has given another direction to those words, as well as traced some of their force to the coloring of the apostle's own mind; and it is our fault, if we choose to take to ourselves the reproofs given to a sensual and half-pagan congregation in a remote age, and continue to keep the majority of our brethren from testifying grateful remembrance of the devoted love of their Redeemer.

Again, there is too much superstition respecting the nature and origin of sin.

Most Orthodox Christians still receive as a literal fact the story of Adam and Eve in the garden, and the loss of Paradise through the subtlety of the Devil in the form of a serpent. If we feel bound to account for the origin of evil, this statement will do as well as any other; the truth being, that we know nothing at all about the matter, and have enough to do in endeavoring to lessen the virulence and extent of its outbreaks in ourselves and others.

The disease of sin is deep-seated and dangerous; but it has not destroyed all the beauty of holiness in human nature; and

judicious treatment, above all, the encouragement of hopeful words, has already done much towards the cure It is impossible to calculate the mischief made by the former prevalence of the doctrine of total depravity, which, with its accompanying resource of Christ's entire sufficiency to atone for any degree of wickedness, was a high premium offered to the recklessness of despair, and a strong temptation to "continue in sin that grace may abound." Add to this a belief in the direct personal agency of the Devil in all wrong impulses and acts, and we have a system which proves the strength of the leaven of good in man, in that he has striven to rise above that depressing influence, and has succeeded. As to the last of these provisions, the existence of a personal Devil, opinion has altered very much since the days when brave Luther threw his inkstand at the tempter's head, and defied him to appear at Worms. It was not strange, that, coming so recently from the atmosphere of monkish visions and saintly legends, and surrounded by the influence of popular belief, this great Reformer should have been imbued with the superstition of his age; and we almost forget to smile at the childishness of his fancies in our admiration of the courage and sincerity with which he met and vanquished his enemy whenever he recognized his presence. If he had suspected evil when moved to denounce those who differed from him in theological questions, and in his dogmatical and illiberal definitions of the essentials of faith and practice, it would have been better for himself and for mankind in general. But we cannot have every thing at once; and Luther cleared the way for many a triumph of liberty since his time.

One of these triumphs is the change from a belief in a veritable Satan, — a kind of fourth great power, sufficiently strong to wage war with the Trinity for countless ages, and to be overcome at last only with the loss of the greater part of the heirs of heaven, who are to suffer with the Arch-fiend in his lower kingdom to all eternity, — to a recognition of sin as a spiritual influence only. It might be better still, if we could all accustom ourselves to regard evil as a wisely appointed means of good, a discipline whose original necessity we do not understand, but of whose efficacy in correcting and purifying our

souls through faults and great tribulations we are entirely certain. But it is a great deal to have become rid of the horns and hoofs, the tridented sceptre, the fire and brimstone, of this old enemy; and, in view of the progress thus far, and the certainty of improvement in the future, we may be of good cheer, and accost our desponding brother in the words of the merry Denys, though with a deeper meaning in our congratulations, "Courage, mon ami! le diable est mort."

There is also too much superstition with regard to the origin and authority of the Episcopal Church. Every bishop, priest, and deacon traces back his ordination to special grace bestowed by apostolic hands; consequently, this Church alone, of all the Protestant Churches, possesses the right to administer the sacraments, and to bind and loose for time and eternity. Consequently, also, the lay members of this Church consider themselves better born and bred, better married and buried, than the rest of the world; and their narrow pale encloses not only "a royal priesthood," but "a chosen generation," "a peculiar people."

Perhaps this pervading sentiment had something to do with the attitude of this Church during the late war for equal rights and the spread of liberty; as her influence not only helped to keep the slave in bondage, but also hindered the efforts made for his deliverance. As a body, the Episcopal Church has always been strongly conservative, and opposed to the progress of liberal ideas. But this qualification implies that there are within her borders many free and brave spirits; some of whom quietly ignore the superstitions of the prevailing party, while others openly protest against its encroachments and unwarrantable assumptions.

It is a matter of astonishment to me, that a sincere Episcopalian can comfort himself for a moment with the idea that there is unity of faith in his Church; still more, that those who realize the great difference of opinion existing and constantly increasing therein should believe that the present system can continue, or even that it has any being at present, except in outward form.

And yet there was Keble, renouncing, for years, his friend-

ship with glorious Thomas Arnold, because he accused the latter of not believing in the "Holy Catholic Church." If these dreamers would take the word "catholic" in its real meaning of *universal*, and then apply the membership to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, whether as God or man, and who are working to develop his principles in their own characters and in the world, they would be laboring to better purpose than in seeking affiliation with Popish bigots, or with the semi-barbarous Greek Catholics of the Russian Church; and would be better prepared for the gradual disappearance of their own narrow boundaries, which must be the speedy or tardy result of the progress of liberal ideas.

There is no doubt that all the present divisions of religious belief will ultimately be merged into a broader plan; perhaps into that universal brotherhood which is the ideal of Christian sentiment, and where the test of acceptance into the highest fellowship on earth, as into the presence of our Father who is in heaven, will be character, and not creed. E.

LETTER FROM INDIA.

CALCUTTA, Jan. 22, 1867.

To the Secretary of the American Unitarian Association.

DEAR BROTHER LOWE, — I said, in my last, that we had commenced a happy new year, in the consummation of what we have been long watching to do, and working to accomplish; and have now introduced the New Testament into the school, which is the heart of the mission, as a class-book. We now study the things that Jesus said and did, and do it on week-days, as freely and regularly as is done by any Bible-class or teachers' meeting in our churches at home. You are aware of the regular division of our two hundred or more pupils into seniors, middle, and juniors. There are three classes of seniors, all of whom read and speak English with tolerable facility; and all of these, with the knowledge of their parents, have the Bible

as one of their regular studies, take notes of the lessons given, and rehearse them to me and pass an examination in them, as the hour for this study comes round. I cannot express to you the satisfaction I have in this work. You are aware that we have always a few Christian pupils — natives of India — in the school, and a few Mahommedans, though the mass of our boys and young men, and all our girls, are from Hindoo homes, in which they are continually invited to crown with flowers, and whisper their *muntras* (secret prayers) to some idol, whether of Gonesh, the elephant-headed god; or of Doorga, the ten-armed goddess; or of Kali, the ministress of fever and cholera, hideously graced with her reeking dagger, and necklace of human skulls. It would have convinced the most sceptical of the divine uses of our mission, could he have seated himself with us yesterday, and seen the bright eyes and smiling faces of these permitted inquirers. I was four years superintendent of the Hollis-street Sunday-school; and have taught Bible-classes in St. Louis and Mobile, in Baltimore and Toronto, in Buffalo, and other American cities, for weeks and months, and occasionally in England, Ireland, and Bengal, *none* of whom had been born to the sad worship of *deprecation*, or, like these natives of India, had inherited, as their only religion, the *dread* of evil spirits. You can easily, therefore, credit the assertion that to me the visible procession of these born slaves into Christian light out of heathen darkness, seen in their arch looks at each other, and realized in their intelligent and glad questionings, has given and is giving me a deeper joy and thankfulness than have ever come to me before. You know, brother, that there is no experience, this side of heaven, to compare in sweetness with that of witnessing and aiding the emergence of a young soul out of spiritual darkness and weakness into gospel light and strength. Two noble women, Mrs. Knight and Mrs. Shaw (neither of them called Unitarians), are each giving one day weekly to Christ's love and service in our carefully secluded classes of Hindoo girls, who assemble daily, from ten to four, in the west wing of our mission-house. Not omitting my six or seven years' habit of preaching, in conversational addresses, to the *whole* school here, half an hour daily (or, as now, on *alternate* days), I have it

in mind to tell you how I manage the new study, book in hand, of the record of Jesus, with our young men, whose ages vary from fifteen or sixteen to twenty or upwards. Bear in mind that these have much acuteness of intellect, — needing *breadth*, but very sharp, and often keenly logical, and pre-occupied by a subtle philosophy. I hand the class three copies of the "Bhagavat Gheeta" in English, as none of them can read it in its original Sanscrit. Here they have it, open it, and scan its pages for themselves. Here also is the gospel of Jesus Christ. We open it with the Sermon on the Mount, and immediately with the Beatitudes, and compare the Bhógŏbŏt (so pronounced), or Holy Psalm of Hindooism, with the gospel of the new faith, which their parents and guardians no longer forbid them to read. First of all, we mark a contrast between the two, in the fact that the Christian gospel everywhere touches life. It is biography, it is history, it is reality. The Bhógŏbŏt is a dateless and wholly *ideal* picture in the mind of a Rishi, or seeker of divine truth. It does not profess to be biography or history, or to relate any thing actually done or said on earth. It has no *witnesses*. It contains several grand affirmations. It declares, in some sort, an immortality of the soul; also the duty of denying the flesh for the spirit, and the need of a chastened and brave activity and valor, so far as these comport with the one proper aim of all human life, which is *nirwana*, rest, rest, more and more absolute, and ultimating in the loss of conscious individuality and personal being. The Rajah Radhakanta is now seeking that rest, in sacred silence, at Brindabun, the holy place, beyond Benares; while Christians, like Miss Carpenter (she was many times with us), go about doing good, and laboring for the elevation of the ignorant and oppressed, in their own and other lands, regardless of increasing years, wisely working redemption in the spirit of Jesus, till they die out of earth into heaven. The Bhógŏbŏt is a supposed dialogue between two imaginary persons, — Krishna and Arjoon, a god and a man. It has nothing to say of man's duty to his neighbor. It centres man's whole attention on *himself*. It would turn every man into iron, like the stoic philosophy of the Greeks. It would make him a heartless, cold-blooded creature,

indifferent to all around him. It reveals nothing of the laws of life, filial, conjugal, social, or rational. This Christian gospel is saturated and overrunning, on every page, with actual life and duty, and trial and triumph, and practical beneficence. How widely different is all this from *your* Hindoo gospel, — if you call it yours. Christians also have a holy psalm, a Gheeta *truly* Bhógŏbŏt, which says, —

> "Oh! where shall rest be found,
> Rest for the weary soul?"

And closes singing, —

> "Alone are found in thee
> The life of perfect love,
> And rest of immortality."

Christians say, —

> "Man is nought, — is *less than nought* (*nirwana*).
> Thou, our God, art all in all."

So this larger gospel welcomes and includes all good that may be found in *your* holy psalm. *All* good, wherever found, comes from one source: nor would Jesus have you surrender aught that is true. "Know the truth," he says; and would have us prove all things, in all Shasters, and hold fast what is good, find it where we may. But the peace of God which he gives is not a loss of power or love or aspiration. It is not that peace which Krishna invites you to, — a rest without feeling, thought, or endeavor. One-sided Christians have sometimes taught that ideal of salvation by faith alone, which is the highest distillation of Hindooism; and there are found Christians to-day who make that the evidence of the gospel of Christ. To me, as I read it, it is a gospel, not of blind faith, but of knowledge and faith, and of love and of power. You will soon see that it does not, like your Hindoo gospel, *forbid*, but it *commands*, the three high duties, — do good always, prove all things, and weep with them that weep. "Pray without ceasing" is not its only commandment. The mischief of the Bhógŏbŏt is, that, by excess of meditating, thoughtless, fruitless, and aimless gazing at the Infinite and Invisible, it defrauds and

ruins, unless corrected by Jesus and his broader truth, both heart and mind and will. It would annihilate all these for the one single faculty of worship. Complete salvation of all faculties, and of the whole man, is found alone in Jesus and his gospel.

So, dear brother Lowe, proceeds our study of the gospel of Christ, — facing, one day, the chief record of Hindooism, and another day that of Islam. Let me not weary you; but please let our helpers know, that Christ is preached by us in his simplicity, and souls are coming freely and gladly to him. Pray for our work, that God, and his angels and his living Christ, be with us alway. Yours truly, DALL.

OUR MISSION IN NORTH CAROLINA.

MISS AMY M. BRADLEY is commissioned and sustained jointly by the American Unitarian Association and the Soldiers' Memorial Society, as a teacher and missionary in Wilmington, N.C. The following extracts from her letters and reports give some account of her work. It will be seen that its purpose combines common-school instruction, industrial training, and direct moral and religious teaching: —

"On Wednesday, Jan. 9, 1867, I opened my school for the poor white children of Wilmington, with the good wishes, and promises of hearty co-operation, of all the prominent men here, and women too, as far as I can learn; and I feel confident of success, if my health remains good. As soon as it was noised around that there was to be a free school in the 'Union Schoolhouse' on 'Dry Pond,' — don't be alarmed for my safety, the 'Pond' is all *sand*, — the children began to 'flock in,' so that, at the end of two weeks, I was obliged to refuse them, as my school was getting too large.

"In my record for the month of January, I have eighty-five names; five have moved away; a few only came for a day; one I have discharged for disobedience: so that, on the first day of

February, I find myself, not a stranger in Wilmington, with a dark prospect before me, as on the first day of January; but a friend amongst friends, with a pleasant school of seventy-five scholars.

"With regard to the government of my school, I do not punish the children for disobedience, — that is, by whipping; but, when I admitted them, I told them the only tuition I charged was good behavior. If they would come on these terms, all well; otherwise, after a fair trial, I should discharge them from the school. I have discharged but one scholar: the effect was magical.

"We have singing; and they are learning to sing the Multiplication Table, — tune, 'Yankee Doodle.' I have visited some twenty-five or thirty families, talked with the parents; they all seemed glad that a day-school, an industrial school, and Sunday school, were to be established. These people are miserably poor."

WILMINGTON, N.C., March 3, 1867.

"DEAR SIR, — Your favor of the 31st ult., notifying me that you had sent, through the Soldiers' Memorial Society, a collection of note-paper, tracts, 'Sunday-school Gazettes,' &c., was duly received; and the articles came safe to hand on the 16th ult. I organized my Sunday school the 10th of February; there were eighteen scholars present. To-day the weather was very unfavorable, yet there were forty children in my school; amongst whom I had the privilege of distributing the 'Gazettes,' and a portion of the tracts. As soon as I can get the children clothed, I think the number will be greatly increased. Talking one day with a girl of fourteen years who attends my day school and sewing-school, she said, 'Miss Bradley, if I had any thing decent to wear on my head, I would go to Sunday school: but I have nothing but this old *shaker* [it truly looked the worse for wear]; and, if I wear this, the other girls will make fun of me.' I gave her to understand, that, in my school, it would not be the good clothes that would stand the highest; then asked her if she thought, to please me, she could muster courage enough to bring her there if the children did laugh at her bonnet. She thought she could, and promised to

come. This morning, true enough, Martha King was present, clean and neat, as far as her poverty would allow. And the veritable *shaker* came also. I think Martha will find her reward in more ways than one."

"I hear that the mayor had a meeting of the influential men of the city, and they voted to 'raise seventy-five dollars, to aid Miss Bradley in furnishing her scholars with books, &c.'"

We have received a letter from a gentleman, resident in Wilmington, in which he says: —

"There have been no free schools ever; consequently, for the great mass, no schools at all. Slavery denied books to the blacks, and schools to the poor whites. It is easy to comprehend what a population, destitute generation after generation of intellectual privileges, and abiding under the shadow of slavery, would become: they became ignorant, thriftless, brutal. I rejoice that you propose to do something to lift them from their unhappy condition. A desire for improvement begins to be manifest among them. They are inquiring for schools. But they are too poor to provide for themselves. To provide daily bread overtaxes their ability. There are many young females that need to be taught some branch or branches of industry that will enable them to support themselves. Labor is now viewed by them as a necessity; it will, therefore, be deemed respectable. Only show them how to labor, and the work is done. Their teachers must come from the North. The institutions of the South have ever been opposed to this work. Consequently, there are none here who know *how* to teach. If any were qualified to teach, the people of every class are too poor to meet the expense. This is admitted on every hand. Yet there must be *free* schools. *This population will not be redeemed without them.*"

Another gentleman (Baptist), who at first was opposed to the mission on sectarian grounds, has said, "I do not blame the children for going to Miss Bradley's Sunday school."

LETTER FROM SOUTH CAROLINA.

[We have had many letters from the South, representing the increasing opportunity for us to exert our influence, especially by the circulation of our papers and tracts. The tracts prepared for freedmen, which we have circulated, have been received so cordially as to give us unexpected encouragement. We quote below one among many letters we have received: —]

Rev. Charles Lowe. March 5, 1867.

Dear Sir, — The tracts you were kind enough to send me came duly to hand; and I have distributed them as judiciously as I could, among my most promising pupils. I wish I could write verbatim their remarks upon them; you would be convinced that they are properly appreciated. One man told me he hardly went to bed the night after I gave him some of them; he could not sleep till he had read them through. Another gave me a long message to send to the "gentleman what sen' em;" of which I only remember, that it was perfectly satisfactory in its character.

But, though these tracts supply one great need of the freedmen as far as they go, there is something else, something different, needed still. They want clear elucidations of the doctrines of religion. They have very firmly fixed opinions concerning the sovereignty of God, the atoning sacrifice of Christ, original sin, the danger of endless damnation, and the strong necessity of conversion; but here, usually, their theology ends. I have never found any Trinitarianism among them, even in those few who can repeat the article of Faith relating to the Godhead. I never heard one of them say "God the Son," except in repeating the Doxology. I don't think that dogma will ever trouble them much.

The other great doctrines of the Christian religion are almost new to them. I never heard one of them base his preaching upon the love of God. They pray to God as the Father; but they do not seem to think of Him as any thing but a Judge. I

think that is the great defect of their theology. It is rather a Christology, the legitimate fruit of Trinitarianism. God is to be feared; but Jesus is all in all.

Some of them are feeling this need, without knowing what it is. One young man, a local preacher, in telling me of a meeting where multitudes thronged to the altar "under conviction," said, timidly, "I could not help thinking, that all that wasn't of much good. They were all worked up so that they did not know what they were about; but how were they any better for such preaching? 'Tisn't the noise that kills folks. But, if we don't preach to them so as to scare them, they'll go away, and say that they havn't had any meeting at all."

You may think that is not a very remarkable sentiment, after all; but it is. Consider all the circumstances, and that this young man was brought up to think there was no way to enter heaven but to be frightened in; that he never heard any thing else preached in his life. Does it not argue some power of mind; and does it not show that he is ripe for a truer religion? Such men will have a great deal to contend with, if they are true to this dawning inward light, especially if they have already entered the ministry. The temptation to become popular, by ministering to the popular taste for horrors, will be not easily overcome.

The rights and duties of citizenship, which the late action of Congress seems to promise the freedmen, are beginning to form the subject for "a heap of studyin'" among them. They have patiently borne wrong and injustice enough to have fired the heart of any lover of right, North or South. The prospect of having those wrongs redressed gives them satisfaction rather than exultation. They are not rid of the feeling that they are an inferior race; that their rights are given them by the grace of man. They receive the overtures of their old masters with willing friendliness; but I do not think they will be led blindly either. Time will show.

LETTER FROM REV. C. A. STAPLES.

MILWAUKEE, Feb. 13, 1867.

MY DEAR MR. LOWE, — You ask me to state, in a clear and brief form, what has been done by the Association during the last two years in the West. Four years ago, at this time, I was the only Unitarian minister within the States of Wisconsin and Minnesota engaged in the work. There were three or four societies in a state of suspended animation, without regular services, and, to all appearances, without hope in the world. At our Local Conference, which met here on the 22d ultimo, and which embraces the States of Wisconsin and Minnesota, thirteen societies were represented by thirteen ministers and twenty-five lay delegates. Two of these ministers are acting as missionaries of the Association, and preaching from Sunday to Sunday, as occasion offers. The others are preaching to regularly organized societies, with which Sunday schools and institutions of benevolence are connected. Three societies are at present without pastors or regular religious services. Thus it appears, that, within the bounds of our Local Conference, we have at least fifteen organized societies with thirteen ministers; where, four years ago, we had but one minister and three or four societies.

Six of these societies have houses of worship of their own, and are free of debt, with a single exception; others are looking forward to building church-edifices at an early day, or buying them from other societies. *All of these societies have been aided by the Association, either in the support of their ministers, or in building houses of worship;* six of them are now receiving no assistance from any source; and others will be self-sustaining after the present year. There are above six hundred children connected with the Sunday schools of these societies; and the schools are generally in a flourishing condition. The number of families represented in them is nearly five hundred.

In addition to this, we have ten places where religious ser-

vices are held occasionally by our ministers; in some, on every other Sunday; in others, once a month; and in others, less frequently. These are some of the results of the last two years' work of the Association here within the bounds of our Conference.

How much has this work cost, and how permanent is it likely to be? I think it has cost not far from eight thousand dollars, including all that has been expended by the Association for church building and missionary service in these two years. *Already these societies are contributing for denominational objects.* One of them has given two thousand dollars for such objects alone in two years; and nearly all of them will contribute this year to the funds of the Western Conference.

As to the permanence of what has been done, that depends very much on what we continue to do. Some of these new societies may break up and disappear; that is a probability no one can help seeing. What enterprises have we that do not sometimes fail, and disappoint those engaged in them? Moral and religious enterprises are quite as successful as business and educational. But we shall not lose any of these societies; and all of them will be self-supporting and strong in five years, if we are faithful in our oversight of them, and prompt and generous in our assistance to them. And I have no doubt that, if we go steadily on, working and giving, trusting and praying, as we have in the last two years, we can easily double the number, and vastly increase the strength and influence of our societies in five years more; saving all we have now planted, and planting as many more.

The societies which we have formed in these States are at the most important centres of influence, — the largest and most rapidly growing towns, and points where there are important educational institutions. At Winona, in Minnesota, where Rev. H. P. Cutting has an earnest and vigorous church, the State Normal School is located. One of the most substantial and beautiful school buildings in this country, costing nearly one hundred thousand dollars, is being erected here by the State for the education of teachers; and hundreds of the young men and women of Minnesota will be brought together here, and to

some extent brought within the influence of liberal preaching. The Normal-school fund of Minnesota already amounts to over one million of dollars, and the income is to be devoted for the present to the support of this institution. What a magnificent opportunity here opens for the training of the teachers of a great and rapidly growing State! And what a grand field of influence for a liberal church such a place affords! In the State of Wisconsin, our Normal-school fund amounts already to upwards of seven hundred thousand dollars, and the income from it for this year is over fifty-seven thousand dollars. We are to have five normal schools, four of which are now located; two of them at places where we have established liberal churches. At Madison, where Rev. Mr. Kimball is working very earnestly and faithfully, in a noble spirit of self-sacrifice, we have our State University, yet in its infancy and feebleness, but ultimately to have a splendid endowment, and to rival its neighbor of Michigan at Ann Arbor. It is more broad and liberal, in one respect, than that, opening its privileges to male and female alike. How unjust it is that a State should do so much for the education of its young men, and nothing for the education of its young women! Wisconsin will have a better record than that.

And nearly all the societies we have established are at points of political and moral influence, where we shall be able to reach the educated and the educating mind of the State. We have not thrown our money away, or expended our labor on places of little importance; though I cannot understand how any money is lost which is expended in spreading the truths of Christianity before men, even if they are preached in the humblest school-house of the land. During the last year, we have made some effort to extend the circulation of our papers and the sale of our books in this State. I have received books, amounting in value to five hundred and seventy-five dollars, from the American Unitarian Association, and kept them on sale here and at various points in the interior. I have received from sales above two hundred dollars, and nearly an equal amount of books is now in the hands of missionaries and agents. We have also done something in extending the circulation of our papers, and distributing tracts. We have been

able to send preachers occasionally to new points for a few Sundays, — not with the expectation of founding societies, but with a view to the spread of our ideas into every town and village of the State, so that people everywhere may know something of our views and work.

I have thus given you a brief outline of what has been done within the bounds of this Local Conference during the last two years. It is not all due to the interest and aid of the Association. The Western Conference has been engaged in the same work, hand in hand with the Association. Together they have expended upwards of ten thousand dollars in this field in two years, four thousand dollars of which were for church buildings. The results, it is true, are nothing very startling or wonderful. Nobody can claim this. But they are encouraging, and show a good return for the money and care invested. Those who have contributed it have reason to believe their money has been well used. And if we will but follow it up with continued, patient, trustful labor and generosity, the harvest in this grand Northwest will be rich and abundant, in a higher type of education, philanthropy, and religion.

I have spoken of this portion of the West, and of the work of the Association here, because I have known more about it than in other sections. But what has been said concerning the work here applies to it in other places. We have been steadily gaining in numbers and influence. We have occupied many of the most important places in the West. We have sent our missionaries over a goodly portion of this great field, bearing our books, papers, and tracts. The work has been carried on quietly, but vigorously; and as much has been accomplished, with the means and the men at our disposal, as any reasonable man could expect. There have been mistakes and failures, and there always will be, in all enterprises, no matter how wise and faithful those may be who have charge of them. But the progress has been fair; and I think many of the gains are very important. The work that has been done, and is being done, at Ann Arbor alone, goes far towards remunerating us for all our expenditures in the West. If that is carried on for five years to come, as it has been in the last two, we shall draw from that in-

stitution alone as many students for the ministry as we are now getting from all other colleges in the country. To hold our hands, or tighten the strings of our purses in the least, would seem to be not only a terrible mistake, but a shame before men and a sin before God. The opportunity enlarges every day, and the means must not be suffered to grow less. A magnificent work is given us to do. How should we be straitened till it is accomplished!

Truly yours, C. A. STAPLES.

SOCIETY IN EXETER, N.H.

WE desire to make this Journal, so far as possible, a complete record for the public of the uses of the money intrusted to the Association; and, inasmuch as the account of the meetings of the Executive Committee gives only a bare summary of their appropriations, it may be proper in some cases, to explain more fully the circumstances which determined the vote.

At the last meeting, $3,000 were voted, with the conditions elsewhere recorded, to the society in Exeter, N.H. During the month previous to the same meeting, several applications for aid in building churches (the applications varying in amount from $500 to $5,000 each) were decided upon adversely in the sub-committees of the Board. They were, however, so interesting and apparently reasonable demands, that doubtless the applicants will find it hard to justify the refusal.

Aid was voted to Exeter in accordance with the policy of the Board chiefly to aid places which are centres of influence.

Phillips Exeter Academy presents an opportunity for influencing young men, such as is found in hardly any other town in the country. Twenty-nine students went from there last year to Harvard College, and nearly that proportion of the class entering at Cambridge go from Exeter every year. On the list of alumni of the Academy are about eighty of our Unitarian ministers; many of whom have been or are among the most prominent men in the denomination.

The charitable foundation of the school draws there a large

class of young men, who, somewhat late in life, form the determination to work their way to an education; so that the average of the students are more thoughtful and mature than in most preparatory institutions.

It is obvious how desirable it is that they should have some liberal religious influence. Now, the whole opportunity for this depends on the very small Unitarian society. They have, by great exertions and sacrifices, almost unaided from abroad, supported their worship; and have given seats, without any charge, to the students, about forty of whom have regularly attended, The society are now obliged to give up their former place of worship, and forced to build. They can only raise enough money to erect a small chapel, wholly inadequate to their needs. They are ready with our assistance, and with such aid as they hope to receive from the alumni of the school (a committee of whom are now making an appeal), to erect a building, such as shall be ample for the accommodation of the students, even if they must bear still a considerable burden of debt.

Besides the Academy, a young ladies' school has just been located in Exeter, with an endowment fund of $250,000, which will add to the opportunity. ED.

OUR PUBLICATIONS.

SINCE the adoption of our new policy in regard to the prices of our books, we have advertised our publications in several religious and secular papers. The result has already been very gratifying. Every day numerous letters are received, asking for our catalogue, or enclosing money for our books, which the exceeding cheapness of price puts within the means of those who value them most. The letters and orders are chiefly from ministers and laymen of other denominations, and from all parts of the country, and are often accompanied by words of encouragement and sympathy. At any rate, there is evidently a strong and widespread desire, among thinking people of other sects, to

become better acquainted with our views, and they welcome this new opportunity.

The following extract from a letter, enclosing ten dollars and an order for books, is an illustration of this correspondence: —

"While in Boston lately, I purchased several books at the Association Rooms; among others, 'The Service of Sorrow.' I am so pleased with it, that I thought to send a copy to some of my friends, 'Orthodox' (so called), in Vermont. I know it can do them no harm, and I hope it may do them some good. The great trouble, I think, is ignorance of what Unitarians think and preach and believe. They set up a sort of imaginary thing, call it Unitarianism, and battle with that."

The following, which came with a money order for books, is from a town in Ohio, where no Unitarian preaching has ever been held: —

"I desire much to get such tracts as will give a plain statement of the doctrines and teachings of the Unitarians, — such as the writings (in tract form) of Dr. Channing, Clarke, May, and others. I should add, there have been statements made here from the *pulpit* about the death of Dr. Channing, the teachings of their best men, that *some* of us know to be untrue. We would like to correct such statements, and propose to do so by circulation of tracts. Be assured we shall be glad to receive such tracts as you may think will best aid the cause of truth and right."

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

[All books received will be promptly acknowledged, and notices will be given of such as are appropriately reviewed in a religious journal.]

Translation of Job, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles, with Introduction and Notes, chiefly explanatory. By GEORGE R. NOYES, D.D. Third edition. Boston: American Unitarian Association.

This volume is the last of the series of translations by Dr. Noyes, now presented to the public through the American Unitarian Association.

The work has been essentially changed by the author in this revision; so that, notwithstanding these translations have so long been recognized as among the most valuable contributions to theological literature, it comes with almost the freshness of a new publication.

In some respects, we regard the present volume the most valuable of the series. There is no other book of the Old Testament which has lost so much by the imperfect rendering of our common version as the Book of Job; and in no part of these translations is the benefit of Professor Noyes's labors so gratefully recognized by the unlearned reader, as where in Job this new rendering reveals the beauty and meaning of magnificent passages which had been obscure and unintelligible before.

We believe this volume will be the means of inducing many to read again connectedly as a whole this wonderful production, which offers not only some of the most sublime poetry which literature affords, but such deep philosophy and such profound religious experience. We cannot help remarking how thoroughly all its teachings, as finally wrought out in the discussions of Job and his friends and the answer of Deity, correspond with the views of Unitarians as contrasted with those of the Calvinistic sects.

The Books of Canticles and Ecclesiastes, which are also included in this volume, are prefaced with careful introductions, explaining the translator's view of the character and purpose of each.

The Notes in this volume are somewhat more copious than in the other volumes of the series.

This whole series of translations may be procured, either together or singly, on application, by letter or otherwise, to the Rooms of the American Unitarian Association. ED.

Our Mutual Friend. By CHARLES DICKENS. With original Illustrations by S. Eytinge, Jr. Boston: Ticknor & Fields.

Another of the Diamond-edition series.

NOTE.

SINCE the issue of our last Journal, we have been informed that the article there attributed to Hon. Edward Everett was originally published anonymously; and, though generally ascribed to Mr. Everett, its authorship was never avowed. We deem it due that this correction should be made. ED.

MEETINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

March 11, 1867. — Present, Messrs. Palfrey, Kidder, Padelford, Smith, Hepworth, Livermore, Crosby, Denny, Sawyer, Shattuck, Fox, and Lowe.

The regular business of the meeting having been laid on the table, the Board proceeded to ballot for a Director, to fill the vacancy occasioned by the resignation of Mr. Weiss; the result being the election of Rev. Edmund B. Willson, of Salem.

The Committee on Publications reported that books had been granted, in response to applications received, to public libraries in East Wilton, Keene, and Dublin, N.H.; the library of the Unitarian Society in Whately, Mass.; the Liberal Christian Union, Brooklyn, N.Y.; and the Public School Library, St. Louis, Mo.

They also reported that an offer had been received from Messrs. Little, Brown, & Co., to sell to the Association, at a low price, the balance of editions of "Greenwood's Sermons," Norton's "Translation of the Gospels," and Norton's "Evidences," and recommended its acceptance.

The report was adopted.

The Committee on the New-England States presented a report, in which the following appropriations were recommended, all of which were adopted: —

1. $200 to the society in Dover, Mass., for the current year, to enable them to retain the services of Rev. George Proctor as their pastor, with the condition that he be released from his parish duty five Sundays during the year for missionary work, to be done under the direction of the Norfolk Conference and the New-England Committee of this Board.

2. $300 for missionary work in New Hampshire, to be done in connection with the New-Hampshire Unitarian Association; the plan contemplated being to supply the pulpits of the several ministers in that Conference, at such times as they might go out upon missionary service in the fields of labor marked out for each.

3. $3,000, with the usual conditions, to aid in building a

church in Exeter, N.H., to be paid whenever the sum of $2,000 should be raised for the same purpose among the Alumni of the Exeter Academy; and on the further condition that sufficient accommodation should always be provided, free of charge, for such students of the academy as might choose to attend.

4. $200 towards the salary of Rev. John Murray, as pastor of the society in Houlton, Me., for six months.

The Committee on the Southern States reported that an application had been received from the society in Washington, D.C., by which it appeared that they had invited Rev. Eli Fay to become their pastor, supposing that the vote of this Board, adopted a year ago, was still in force; whereas that appropriation was made with the condition that a pastor should be settled prior to Oct. 1, 1866. The Committee recommended that a new appropriation be made, which recommendation was adopted.

This Committee also announced the reception of reports from Miss Amy M. Bradley, concerning her work in Wilmington, N.C.; and of earnest appeals for the establishment of missions in Nashville and Knoxville, Tenn.

The Committte on the Western States submitted reports from Rev. William Bradley, Rev. T. D. Howard, Rev. M. G. Kimball, Rev. C. H. Brigham, and Rev. C. A. Staples.

The Committee on Foreign Missions submitted reports from Rev. C. H. A. Dall.

A Committee of three was appointed to make arrangements for the coming annual meeting.

The Board then adjourned to Monday, April 15.

INTELLIGENCE.

THE OHIO-VALLEY CONFERENCE OF UNITARIAN AND OTHER CHRISTIAN CHURCHES was organized at Louisville, Ky., on Friday, Feb. 22, the meeting continuing several days.

The following officers were chosen for the ensuing year: President, Hon. James Speed, Louisville, Ky.; Vice-Presidents, E. S. Throop, Cincinnati, Ohio, and Rev. George W. Hosmer,

D.D., President of Antioch College; Recording Secretary, Rev. David H. Clark, Evansville, Ind.; Corresponding Secretary, Rev. John H. Heywood, Louisville, Ky.: Treasurer, William S. Ward, Marietta, Ohio.

Sermons were preached by Rev. George W. Hosmer, D.D., and Rev. A. D. Mayo; and an Essay, on the new work opening in the South and South-west, was read by Major E. B. Whitman.

The following resolutions were adopted: —

1. That this Conference tenders its hearty sympathies to all Christian Churches within its boundaries, and desires to be on terms of religious union for good works with all who labor to bring in Christ's kingdom of love to God and man.

2. That this Conference desires to be on terms of Christian working fellowship with all denominations and churches of our Liberal Christian faith in the valley of the Ohio, and cheerfully recognizes the eminent services especially of the Universalist and "Christian" bodies in this region.

3. That this Conference suggests the propriety of holding a grand Convention of all Liberal Christian Churches of the Ohio Valley in the city of Cincinnati, at some time during the coming autumn, for the interchange of ideas, the promotion of religious fellowship, and consultation on the best methods of advancing our common cause of the pure religion of Jesus Christ: and would indicate Rev. A. W. Bruce, of Columbus (Universalist); Rev. Austin Craig, of Yellow Springs ("Christian"); and Rev. G. W. Hosmer, President of Antioch College (Unitarian), — as a suitable committee to ascertain the practicability of such a meeting.

Rev. Frederic Hinckley was installed as pastor of the Harrison-square Society, Dorchester, Mass., on Sunday evening, March 3. Selections from the Scriptures were read by Rev. Thomas J. Mumford, of the Third Religious Society, Dorchester; the installing prayer was offered by Rev. Nathaniel Hall, of the First Parish; and Mr. Hinckley preached the sermon.

The Suffolk Conference held a public meeting on Sunday evening, March 10, at the Music Hall, Boston.

Addresses were made by Hon. John A. Andrew, President of the Conference; Rev. Charles Lowe, Secretary of the American Unitarian Association; Rev. Samuel K. Lothrop, D.D., Rev.

George H. Hepworth, Rev. Edward E. Hale, and Mr. Henry P. Kidder.

A resolution, offered by Mr. Wm. H. Baldwin, was unanimously adopted, pledging the churches of the Suffolk Conference to contribute $30,000 of the funds to be raised for the American Unitarian Association the present year.

Rev. John R. Effinger, formerly of the Methodist denomination, and pastor of the society in Washington, D.C., has accepted an invitation to take temporary charge of the society in Keokuk, Iowa.

The Suffolk Conference held its regular quarterly meeting in the vestry of the Hollis-street Church, Boston, on Monday afternoon, March 18. The Secretary, Rev. George L. Chaney, presented a report of the doings of the Conference since its organization; and other business was transacted.

Rev. Levi W. Ham has resigned the charge of the society in Rowe, Mass.

Rev. Charles B. Webster has accepted a call from the new Unitarian Society in Binghampton, N.Y.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

1867.			
Feb. 19.	From	Dr. I. S. French, as an annual membership . .	$1.00
20.	,,	Rev. J. H. Lovering, as an annual membership.	1.00
21.	,,	Robert Mason, Jacksonville, Ill.	5.00
21.	,,	Wm. Dyer and E. Norris, as annual memberships	2.00
27.	,,	Miss E. S. Nash, as an annual membership . .	2.00
Mar. 1.	,,	Rev. Fielder Israel and E. A. Wadleigh, as annual memberships	2.00
4.	,,	Rev. E. C. L. Browne and Rev. W. T. Crapster, as annual memberships	2.00
4.	,,	Rev. Dr. Putnam's Society, Roxbury, for Monthly Journals	20.00
7.	,,	H. B. Williams, as an annual membership . .	1.00
11.	,,	David Brown and H. W. Fuller, as annual memberships	2.00
12.	,,	Mrs. Anna Richmond, Providence, R.I., to make herself a life member	30.00
13.	,,	Rev. Stillman Barber, as an annual membership.	1.00
15.	,,	Rev. Henry Blanchard, as an annual membership	1.00
16.	,,	Thomas Phillips and Azar Harris, as annual memberships	2.00
20.	,,	Society in Saco, Me.	50.00